



Aruba The News

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Carnaval 55 comes to full bloom with the San Nicolas Children's Parade



Aruba's 2009 Carnival season kicked off in the beginning of January with the popular Torch Parade, and a number of casual parades and jump-ups have "warmed up" the public for the frenzy of activity that began this past weekend, cul-

minating in the Children's Parade in San Nicolas.

After the coronation of the Carnival Queens in the youth and adult categories, and the selection of the official road march, the royalty of Carnival 55 lead island children

through the streets of San Nicolas in the first parade where groups unveiled the more formal costumes, road pieces and floats for which carnival is famous.

Children's parades are always a treat, as the adorable

youngsters demonstrate they have the carnival spirit from an early age, and toddlers can jiggle their hips just like the pros when the irresistible beat of the music begins.

Spectators admired hip-pies with giant afros, adorable

little girls from China, and Spanish fan dancers as the parade wended its way through the streets of San Nicolas, heralding the final weeks of Carnival 55 and the more elaborate displays of Carnival traditions.

The final queen election...

Flor Maria Croes Bislik is the 15th Mrs. Carnaval

Fifteen years ago some Carnival enthusiasts wondered why should only very young girls have all the fun of participating in a pageant and becoming Carnival royalty, and the Mrs. Carnaval elections were founded.

A tradition of the elections and the shows by the candidates has always been to take

advantage of their maturity and experience by injecting more than a little humor into their productions, originally they mostly consisted of what was in reality a stand-up comedy routine. The Mrs. Carnaval Queen elections have evolved, and simple home made outfits have gone the way of custom designed gowns worn during elaborate production numbers, but the humor and antics remain to make it the most entertaining and amusing of all the queen elections.

It was Flor Maria Croes Bislik, who demonstrated enormous grace and carnival spirit, which won her the Best Speech trophy, as well who was crowned as Mrs. Carnaval by Aruba's Minister of Labor, Culture and Sport, Ramon

Lee. First-runner up Jacqueline Mariela Kwidama, representing the White-Yellow Cross, staged a delightfully humorous show reflecting the work of the agency she represented. The image of grown men dancing around in diapers will stay with the spectators for long after the pageant. Second runner-up Gerta Lopez-Penha of Majestic Group deserved the trophy for best show, as her group staged a memorable and stylish production marked by her performance full of the charm and ebullience that is the trademark of carnival spirit. Susan Ras, representing the FCCA/Compagnashi-Majestic Carnaval Group was named the MAS Queen, elected by text mes-



sage to SETAR, and took the trophies for Most Popular and Best Costume.

There were eight candidates for the title of Mrs. Car-

naval 55; each proving that when it comes to Carnival Queens, "Baby, you're not getting older, you're getting better!"

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